

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

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TAGS: PFOR, MARR, TH, US MILITARY

SUBJECT: FOREIGN MINISTER ON U.S. PRESENCE

THE FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS OF AN UNOFFICIAL USIS TRANSLATION OF
A PRESS CONFERENCE GIVEN BY FOREIGN MINISTER CHARUNPHAN ISRANGKUN
NAAYUTHAYA ON DECEMBER 28.

1. REPORTER: THE M*INISTER F DEFENSE GAVE A PRESS CONFERENCE
A FEW DAYS AGO IN WHICH HE SAID THERE ARE 28,000 AMERICAN
SERVICEMENT STILL LEFT IN THAILAND NOW AND THAT THE CEILING
AGREED ON FOR AMERICAN MILITARY FORCES TO BE STATIONED IN
THAILAND IS THE MAXIMUM OF 33,000 MEN THE AMERICAN EMBASSY
STATED YESTERDAY THAT THIS IS INACCURATE AND IT IS A SUBJECT
WHICH THE THAI GOVERNMENT SHOULD CLARFITY. COULD THE MINISTRY
OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS MAKE A STATEMENT CLARIFYING IT?

CHARUNPHAN: THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS IS CONCERNED WITH
IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICY. AS IJ HAVE BEFORE, CONSULTATIONS
ARE HELD JOINTLY WITH THE MILITARY WHEN CONSIDERATION IS
PAID TO THE WITHDRAWAL OF SERVICEMENT, WEAPONS, AND PLANES
FROM THAILAND. REPORTS I HAVE RECEIVED HAVE INFORMED ME
THAT*CONTACTS ARE BEING HELD REGULARLY *ETWEEN BOTH SIDES,
THAI AND AMERICAN, AND THE WITHDRAWAL OF SERVICEMENT AND
PLANES IS BEING CARRIED ON STEP BY STEP. THE NUMBER OF
SERVICEMENT AND PLANES THAT ARE WITHDRAWN IS ENTRUSTED TO THE
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MINISTRY OF DEFENSE AND WHEN THE TIME IS REACHED FOR EACH
WITHDRAWAL THE MILITARY WILL INFORM MASS MEDIA. I HOWEVER,

WISH TO INFORM YOU THAT WITHDRAWALS HAVE NOT BEEN STOPPED BUT THEY ARE BEING CARRIED ON GRADUALLY IN REGARD TO THIS, I WISH ALL OF YOU TO CONSIDER THE SITUATION IN INDOCHINA JOINTLY ALSO BECAUSE I* WILL HELP UNDERSTAND THE SITUATION MORE CLEARLY. THIS IS BECAUSE THE REASON WHY MILITARY UNITS CONCERNED WITH THE AMERICAN AIR FORCE CAME AND WERE STATIONED HERE WAS CONCERNED WITH DEVELOPMENTS IN THE SITUATION IN INDOCHINA, NOT CONCERNED WITH THE SITUATION OR ANY INCIDENT IN THAILAND. WE HAVE ASSERTED CONSTANTLY AND THROUGHOUT THAT WE WILL USE OUR OWN FORCES TO OPPOSE INSUREGENCY AND SUBVERSION IN OUR OWN COUNTRY. AMERICAN MILITARY FORCES HAVE COME AND BEEN STATIONED HERE BECAUSE OF THE SITUATION IN INDOCHINA. THEREFORE THE MORE THE SITUATION IN INDOCHINA CLEARS UP AND PAVES THE WAY FOR PEACE TO BE RESTORED, THE LESS NEED THERE WILL BE FOR AMERICAN MILITARY FORCES TO BE STATIONED HERE. I THEREFORE WISH TO INFORM YOU THAT IT IS OUR PERTINENT AIM AND OBJECTIVE FOR THE UNITED STATES TO WITHDRAW ITS MILITARY FORCES WHEN A SUITABLE TIME IS REACHED. BUT SHOULD THERE STILL BE VARIOUS NECESSITIES THEIR WITHDRAWAL MUST BE CARRIED OUT GRADUALLY. SHOULD THE OTHER SIDE STOP COMMITTING AGRESSION AND CONFORM TO THE PEACE AGREEMENT OR CEASEFIRE AGREEMENTS REACHED, THEN THOSE NECESSITIES WOULD BE ENDED AND NO PROBLEMS WOULD BE FACED.

2. REPORTER...

CHARUNPHAN: DO YOU MEAN WITHDRAWALS? I UNDERSTAND THEY ARE STILL BEING CARRIED ON STEADILY.

3. REPORTER: WHAT WAS MEANT IN THAT QUESTION IS WHETHER YOU FEEL THAT THERE SHOULD BE INCREASED WITHDRAWALS, IN VIEW OF THE SITUATION?

CHARUNPHAN: AS I HAVE SAID ALREADY, IT IS NECESSARY TO STUDY THE SITUATION IN NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES. SHOULD COMPROMISES BE REACHED AND CARRIED OUT IN AN ORDERLY MANNER, RESTORING PEACE TO LANDS WHICH WERE FORMERLY FACED WITH PROBLEMS AND TROUBLE THEN WITHDRAWALS COULD BE CARRIED OUT SPEEDILY. BUT AS YOU ALL KNOW, THIS IS THE TIME AND SEASON OF THE YEAR WHEN FIGHTING

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AND MILITARY ACTIVITIES HAVE BEEN APT TO BE STEPPED UP IN THE PAST. THIS IS A FACT WE SHOULD BEAR IN MIND ALSO, AND THIS IS THE REASON WHY I FEEL THAT VARIOUS WITHDRAWALS CANNOT BE CARRIED ON TO ANY LARGE EXTENT AT PRESENT.

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